

PREFACE

The dawn of the twentieth century found the Muslims debating on the issue whether or not the Muslims must form a political organisation. The foundation of the All-India Muslim League in Dacca in December 1906 was the outcome of this exercise which played a vital role in the development of Muslim politics in India. The period under study (1900-1919) is an important one as it has seen the emergence of different schools of thought within the League. It shaped Muslim politics by providing them a distinct platform exclusively devoted to safeguarding Muslim interests and establishing their identity without interfering in the politics of other communities.

At the outset the League was pro-British, a loyal body which had approached Lord Minto, 'Most respectfully'. But within a period of six years, it made 'self-government' in a 'suitable form' for India as its object. The Tripoli and the Balkan wars brought it closer to Indian National Congress and the Lucknow Pact further reinforced the prospects of communal harmony. Thus the whole period of nineteen years presents a study of Anglo-Muslim cooperation and estrangement, followed by Hindu-Muslim rapprochement.

The growth and development of Muslim politics from conservative to liberal and then to radical schools is a phenomenon which explains how the pressure of circumstances forced a loyal body to change its creed from passive pro-

Britishness to assertive anti-Britishness. The Aligarh School with its pro-British leaning was the nucleus which created political consciousness among the Muslims towards the close of the nineteenth century. But in spite of the pro-British slant of the Aligarh Movement, patriots like Muhammad Ali, Shaukat Ali, Zafar Ali Khan, Hasrat Mohani and a host of others courageously set their faces against the British only after thirty years of the foundation of the Aligarh School.

This work consists of six chapters. The first chapter deals with the impact of the Mutiny on Muslims and the services rendered by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his contemporaries in directing the Muslims to a clear cut goal. Sir Syed was conscious of the fact that as a consequence of the British rule in India and the gradual influx of new forces the Muslims could not remain silent spectators. He founded the United Indian Patriotic Association and the Anglo-Oriental Defence Association and thus laid the foundation of Muslim politics. The second chapter deals with the formation of the Muslim League. Here I have tried to argue that the Simla Deputation was not a 'Command Performance'. The Muslim intelligentsia had reached a stage when the formation of the League was inevitable. I have also tried to dispel the idea that the League in its initial stages was a communal organisation. It was intended to function as a channel of communication between Muslims and the British on one hand, and Muslims and other political organisations on the

other. The third chapter deals with the policies of Indian Government as well as Home Government vis-a-vis the Muslim demand for separate electorates. It also studies why such a scheme was considered expedient. The fourth chapter deals with the Anglo-Muslim estrangement and studies the forces which were to compel the Muslim League to move away from passive loyalism into political activism. The fifth chapter is a corollary to the previous one and highlights the creation of a school of radicals quite parallel to that of the extremist section in the Congress. The sixth chapter deals with the Congress-League rapprochement which brought these two organisations very close to each other politically. In the conclusion, an attempt has been made to summarise the whole trend of Muslim politics of the period under study.

The present work is based on private papers, proceedings of the Home Department, original records, news-papers, unpublished theses and published books. The microfilms of the Curzon-Hamilton Papers, Minto-Morley Papers, Hardinge Papers, Montagu-Chelmsford Papers and Tyabji Papers were provided by the National Archives of India, New Delhi. It also furnished me with the proceedings of the Home Department. The microfilms of The Times were available at the Sapru House Library and the British Council Library. The files of the Mussalman, the Englishman, the Bongalee, the Alhag and the Muslim Patriot were

found at the National Library, Calcutta. The Allahabad Public Library made it possible for me to study the complete set of the Pioneer, a very valuable collection not available anywhere else in India, while the Allahabad University Library provided the relevant journals. The Maulana Azad Library of the Aligarh Muslim University gave me access to a few unpublished letters of the League, the Aligarh Institute Gazette, the Aligarh Monthly, the Muslim Outlook and the Comrade, the Al-Hilal, and the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, made available microfilms of the Independent, the Bombay Chronicle, the Tribune, the Gujarati, Lord Reading Papers and the All-India Congress Committee Papers, Central National Muhammadan Association Papers and some of the unpublished theses. A detailed statement of the material used while making this study has been given in the form of bibliography at the end of this book.

The growth and development of Muslim politics and the attitude of Muslims towards the Government could not have been properly studied in the absence of authentic texts. I have, therefore, at some places, cited long quotations, added plenty of new material and have given fresh interpretation of the facts. Quotations from original text have also been cited in order to dispel doubts and give a clearer picture of the incident and place in proper perspective.

I would like to express my gratitude to my revered teacher Professor A.B.Lal, formerly Vice-Chancellor, University

of Allahabad who suggested me the present topic after the completion of my D.Phil. under his supervision.

I acknowledge my profound gratefulness to my another erudite teacher Professor A.D.Pant, Director, G.B.Institute of Social Sciences, Allahabad, who not-withstanding his unavoidable pre-occupations, supervised the work, went through the whole manuscript and offered useful comments. I profitted immensely from the comments of Professor Rasheeduddin Khan (JNU), Professor Ali Ashraf (Jamia Milliah), Professor S.A.H.Haqqi, and Professor A.F.Usmani of the Political Science Department, Aligarh Muslim University, who spared time to enable me to discuss with them a number of controversial issues relating to my studies for which I am immensely thankful to them.

I must place on record my thanks to the Librarians and staff of the National Library, Calcutta, University Library Allahabad, Allahabad Public Library, Allahabad, Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, the National Archives of India, New Delhi, the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, the British Council Library, New Delhi and the Sapru House Library, New Delhi, for their ungrudging assistance which facilitated the completion of the present work.

Aligarh, December 1988

SHAN MUHAMMAD